

The KEY

A Publication of Central Presbyterian Church
Summit, NJ

Spring 2024

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A Letter from the Pastor

Beloved,

Thank you for your very warm welcome back to the Central Church family! After 25 years, it is a privilege to return to the staff as your Interim Senior Pastor. It has been a tremendous gift to connect and to reconnect. It has also been a great gift to **get to know Central's** faithful and dedicated staff.

Since I arrived on February 1, my priority has been to settle in and to make connections with **you and the church's** leadership teams. I have been grateful for the conversations I have been able to share and look forward to many more. Working with the staff, another priority has been to continue to nurture our worship life together, especially as we have traveled through the Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. In these initial weeks,

there have also been tender pastoral times as we experience the loss of a number of long-time members. It has been a privilege to gather with their loved ones and our community to celebrate their lives.

These first two months have been about *entering* this season of interim ministry, which we have done together. Our next phase is referred to as *dwelling*. During this next season, we are to look at who we are at Central Church and begin to dream about who God is calling this faith community to be. Essential to this next phase is listening to you, the congregation. To guide this process, I have gathered a wonderful Mission Task Force Team. They will create opportunities to listen and discern. I will be sending a more detailed letter about this process soon.



The Mission Task Force Team will synthesize the information they have gathered, which will take us into the next season of interim ministry called *discovery*. A Mission Study report will be prepared and submitted to the Presbytery. Once that report is approved, the congregation will elect our Senior Pastor Nominating Committee and their work will begin on behalf of the congregation.

As we enter into the dwelling and discovery phases of this interim season, we ask for your presence and participation.

(continued next page)

How to Worship with Central

Central is worshipping in-person Sundays at 8:30 & 10:00 a.m., plus WAVE on select Sundays at 5:00 p.m.

In addition, watch us **live on Summit's** Hometowne TV, Verizon Fios channel 33, and Comcast channel 36, or live streamed on our YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/@centralpresbyterian/streams> at 10:00 a.m. Sundays September through June.

Website:
Visit www.centralpres.org/sermons for links to our recent worship videos.

A Letter from the Pastor, cont.

- Please continue to pray for Central Church, its staff, and leaders. We especially ask for prayers for the Mission Task Force Team.
- Please communicate with the Mission Task Force Team about your dreams for Central **Church's next** chapter of ministry. This gives critical guidance regarding the call of the next Senior Pastor.

Since my return, I have

appreciated learning about these past 25 years of life and ministry. Of course, there have been changes and transitions, but Central Church still has a wonderful heart. I am very excited to see what the next chapters will bring for this faith community!

With gratitude and anticipation in Christ,

Jan Ammon
Interim Senior
Pastor



WAVE Worship

WAVE is Central's contemporary worship service, held on select Sunday evenings in the auditorium, or on the church lawn when the weather is good. The service is very family-friendly and open to everyone on a come-as-you-are basis.

WAVE will gather on

April 21 at 5:00 p.m. to celebrate Earth Day. The supper will feature Mediterranean food.

May 5 brings a Cinco de Mayo celebration with Taco Salad for supper.

Additional dates include May 19 and June 2.

WAVE
CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Meet Our Lay Leaders: Kevin Hill



You may have seen Kevin Hill in worship, or his picture in one of the many articles about our mission partners—Kevin is Co-Chair of **Central's Mission Team**.

Kevin's story is one of determination and grit. Having been born in Newark, he describes his upbringing as **"challenging", referring to being an only child in a single-parent household with alcoholism and a total lack of family support.** From this difficult beginning, Kevin managed to not only graduate high school, but to attend Seton Hall University, and earn degrees from Nyack College, graduating first in his class and becoming a member of the National Honor Society. **Kevin holds a bachelor's de-**

gree in Organizational Management, and a master's in Organizational Leadership. Kevin was willing to do the work to get a better **life, and says, "My family wasn't looking out for me, so God did."**

Twenty-eight years ago, Kevin was working in New York City and living in Short Hills, when a co-worker named Dave Sebastian invited Kevin to come to Central and check it out—Kevin did, and stayed.

Over the years Kevin has been a Deacon, and Elder, member of the Mission Team, Liturgist, and served in youth ministry as a Confirmation mentor, going on Bridges Runs, and running the College Scholarship Program.

Kevin tells a story of September 11, 2001 **when "God had his hand on my shoulder."** His office was on the 86th floor of Tower One of the World Trade Center and he was scheduled to have brunch at Windows of

the World that day. The previous week his car was damaged at the car wash, and the only date he could get at the body shop was September 11th. Tower One was destroyed in the terrorist attack that day.

Favorite things at Central for Kevin include the annual Christmas Eve service, and working on the Mission Team. He feels strongly about supporting youth, as he himself has no role models on ethics **and how to "adult".** Kevin says it is important to uplift others, and when he is feeling down, he immediately goes out to help others.

Kevin loves to watch sports, visit museums, and play golf. He runs his own business—a consulting and corporate advisory practice.

You can see Kevin on HTTV, currently a guest on the discussion show **"Community Influencers", an unscripted show** about mentoring and adversity.

"You can't let fear overcome you. Be afraid, but do it anyway."





Mission Spotlight: Family Promise

Central has a long history with Family Promise—in fact, its founder, Karen Olson, was a member here when the project began as Home First.

Our membership is familiar with the pre-COVID practice of housing families struggling with housing insecurity in houses of worship for a week or so at a time—these families were a common sight at Central for several weeks each year. Where do these families stay now?

The answer is temporary shelter apartments, with support from those congregations who used to host families, and other corporate sponsors. Central has been integral to supporting, both financially and physically, **Family Promise's new model.**

There are five apartments (in Linden, Rahway, and Elizabeth) used as enhanced emergency shelters. Central has donated

furniture and basic necessities to get these apartments ready for their occupants.

A hosting schedule still exists for congregations—**Central's next slot is May 5 to May 12.** We are collecting Shoprite and Uber gift cards to support the families—please put them in an envelope marked **“Family Promise”** and place them in the secure mailbox on the wall opposite the kitchen door. There is also the opportunity for people in our congregation to prepare and deliver a meal during our May host week to any of the families in their Temporary Shelter Apartments. Please contact Francie Cho at YFCho@comcast.net to participate.

Family Promise of Union County provides weekly visits by case workers to each family housed in one of the apartments, and provides support to their residents even after they move on from the temporary shelters, providing rent assis-

tance and help with maintaining their new homes.

Central's financial support of FPUC helps support Family Promise's programs, including the nation-wide Open Table Program where rigorously trained volunteers maintain 12-month relationships with families, and the new Core Table Model where a group of 8 to 10 volunteers (5 of whom have experienced homelessness themselves) work with a family to provide whatever type of support is needed in the particular situation.

Family Promise remains focused on relationships and meaningful experiences. They maintain that of the 2.5 million children who will face homelessness this year, ALL deserve homes. And Central is helping.



Mission Co-Chair Kevin Hill presenting a check from Central to FPUC's Corina Borg.

Elizabethport Tutoring Program Seeking Leaders and Volunteers

Elizabethport tutoring has been a mission and vital program at Central Presbyterian Church since 1969. This program matches service-minded high school students from Summit and surrounding communities (the tutors) with elementary/middle school students from Elizabethport and Summit who could benefit from extra academic help. Our mission is to help these children succeed and build confidence by providing help with homework, building and re-enforcing fundamental skills (reading, writing and math) and mixing in occasional science and art projects.

Leaders begin in August recruiting tutors

by connecting with local high schools, getting in contact with Elizabethport regarding supervisors and students, and ordering supplies.

The tutoring sessions occur every Tuesday evening at the church from 6:45-8:00 p.m. beginning in early October and continuing until early April. A simple snack is provided each week. An orientation/information session is held in September for any and all interested in becoming tutors. and leaders pair tutors to students. We currently have approximately 20 student tutees and 45 tutors.

Leading this program involves arranging snacks, curriculum, crafts and parties, payroll and security. These jobs may be covered by several volunteers—more hands make lighter work!

We have been run-

ning this program for over 10 years and are now ready to support and guide the next group of volunteer leaders to manage this worthwhile program and continue to build on its mission.

Please reach out to either of us with any questions or to gain further knowledge about this program. Thank you in advance for your consideration of helping to run or support this transformative program.

Co-Supervisors:

Sarah Engle
908-884-7920

Ellen Burchenal
908-227-0057



Membership & Fellowship Team News

Following the celebration of the Steeles on January 28th, and welcoming back Pastor Jan Ammon, Susan Peterson kept Take Ten going and WAVE attendees began to sign up and contribute foods for their light suppers.

Palm Sunday's Brunch prepared by Susan and her volunteers was enjoyed by all. Pastor Jan welcomed the crowded Easter Sunday sanctuary highlighting our new Pew Cards for visitors and members alike to peruse.

The Membership/Fellowship TEAM invites YOU to join us, by attending the newly arranged planning meetings, the first Wednesday of each month (except July) at 7:00 p.m. in the North Classroom. We offer special opportunities for one time OR continued volunteering insuring our Church is welcoming and supportive. Stop by or contact mibs_wagner@hotmail.com to participate as you can. Next meet-

ing: May 1, at 7:00 p.m. in the North Classroom.

Thanks to Richard **Wright's donation**, TWO Cream Teas are planned for early June. One will be a morning **"Toyland Tea" for children** 4 years old and older. An elegant Cream Tea for adults will be that afternoon. Seating will be limited. Watch for more details and read the special article on Richard within this Key.

On May 19, Pastor Jan will welcome New Members to Central. Special plans are being made to include the more than 90 members who have joined Central these past five years since Covid took its toll. Look for the details.

"Concerts & Lectures" the Team is pursuing plans to travel to NYC **via bus for "an event" and also, to "Host" a** very special speaker from within our community as well as others you might suggest for the months to come. All suggestions are welcome!

If you enjoy knitting, crocheting, or just chatting in an inviting group, join the Knitting Circle meeting one Tuesday evening each **month in someone's home** at 7:00 p.m.. Contact Lori Donohue or Mary Moser for details.

Our Book Club of many years meets monthly in a **member's home, usually the** third Friday evening of the month. Please contact Mibs Wagner for more information.

Mibs_wagner@hotmail.com

Thanks to all who pitch in at Take Tens and WAVE services, to Earle Eaton who tirelessly mans the dishwasher each Sunday, and for YOUR efforts in making all feel welcome both in the Sanctuary and at all our events. Name tags will be available to all at our gatherings in the future. Do fill one in and wear it! And remember to reach out and make all feel welcome!

New Church Directories are available — check with the Church Office for your copy.

Mibs Wagner,
Membership & Fellowship
Team

Richard Wright and the Secret Tea Room

How very fortunate Central is to have welcomed a most special family to our midst. Anuska Paul and Richard Wright, along with their children, Charlotte and Lawrence, have been regulars in our church for a number of years. They moved here after Richard began the Secret Tea Room in 2020. He soon found another prime location for his Secret Tea Room at **Reeve's Reed Arboretum** where he utilizes not only the Conservatory but the terraces as

well!

Richard donated his expertise and all the **foods for last August's** enchanting Cream Tea held at the home of Francie and Yon Cho. He is now coordinating plans for our Central High Cream Teas to be held in early June as **well. A "Toyland Tea"** is planned for youngsters over 4 years old on the same day as the Cream Tea for adults. This will be his second donation of expertise, and presentation for Central! Watch for

the upcoming details and enjoy these special presentations by Richard.

Learn more about the Secret Tea Room at www.secrettearoom.us



Grounds Clean Up Days

Each spring, Central **hosts "Grounds Clean-up Days"** where members and friends are invited to bring their gardening tools and spend a few hours digging up weeds, planting flowers, spreading mulch, pruning, and doing other sorts of things our landscape needs each year. So if your hands are just

itching to get into the dirt, join in the fun!

The Buildings & Ground Team has several days planned for April and May—watch the Friday Email and Sunday bulletin for the specific dates and times.

All volunteers are appreciated!



Photo Gallery



Farewell to Don & Donna Steele



Welcome to Rev. Jan Ammon

Chili Cook off Winners at WAVE



Pancake Brunch Fundraiser

Photo Gallery



Palm Sunday Brunch & Easter Egg Hunt



Easter

Central's College Scholarships

Central Presbyterian Church annually awards the following college scholarships to graduating seniors associated with the church, made possible through the generosity of numbers of interested members and families. The application is due on May 1, 2024—see the Friday Email or our website for the online application.

The following is a list of currently available scholarships:

Laura C. Binder Central Presbyterian Church Service Award

The recipient must demonstrate an active interest in one or more of CPC's ministries.

Central Presbyterian Church Leadership Award

Periodically awarded to a student planning for a career in the ministry, or related fields.

Greer Scholar-Athlete Award

Given annually to a student who excels in both athletics and academics. The scholarship honors Robert Bratton Greer II.

Dorothy Tawney Christian Service Award

The recipient must demonstrate a willingness to engage in the work of the Christian Church in Summit and beyond.

Jeanette Thatcher Christian Service Award

The recipient must demonstrate a willingness to engage in the work of the Christian Church in Summit and beyond.

Francis Brown Beattie CPC Service Award

The recipient must demonstrate an active interest in one or more of the ministries of Central Presbyterian Church.



Children and Youth

Thank you all for your support of the Youth Mission Trip! We are about a third of the way to our fundraising goal, and we are looking forward to a car wash, restaurant night, tea party, and bake sale still to come.

This summer, Central is teaming up with Christ Church in Summit for our mission trip to Maine. We are excited to repair homes, connect with home owners, and spend time thinking about how we are called into service through faith. We will be staying at the University of Farmington, and serving people in the surrounding communities. Farmington is a lovely college town, with a cute downtown with shops and restaurants.

We will be working with Mission at the Eastward (MATE). Mission at the Eastward has served the rural poor in Maine for decades, striving to keep people safe, warm, healthy, and housed through the cold Maine winters.

During our last trip to Maine, our projects ranged from building a wheel chair ramp, winterizing a trailer, building a deck, and painting a house.



As the kids and families work to prepare for our trip, we ask that you would join with us in prayer- prayer for our leaders and youth as they prepare for the trip, prayer for the joy of making new friends, and working together toward a goal, prayer for the families that we will be serving with, and prayer that we would all grow closer to God.

Central's Lori Donohue said of her family's involvement with our mission trips, "Our 3 daughters all attended 3-4 mission trips apiece. They all found it to be a very valuable experience that enabled them to

bond with other high schoolers as well as CPC adult leaders with all of whom they still feel a special bond. And of course they found the joy in helping others who are less fortunate."

The support of the congregation is one of the best parts of the trip - and the kids and families have remarked on the generosity and care of the congregation. Thank you!

Upcoming Fundraising Dates:

April 11: Restaurant Night at Pizza Vita

May 12: Bake Sale

June 1: Tea Party

June 9: Car Vacuuming

June 16: Tool Sale



Finance Report

CENTRAL QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION

ALL \$000

	DEC 2023	% OF 2023 BUDGET	DEC 2022
INCOME			
REGULAR GIVING	\$615	102%	\$575
TOTAL INCOME	\$901	131%	\$650
EXPENSES			
PERSONNEL	\$909	101%	\$799
BUILDING AND GROUNDS	\$192	101%	\$177
ALL OTHER	\$201	15%	\$197
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,302	97%	\$1,173
SHORTFALL IN EXCESS OF BUDGETED 4% DRAW COVERED BY UNRESTRICTED ENDOWMENT	\$127		\$239
VALUE OF UNRESTRICTED ENDOWMENT	\$6,839		\$6,269
MISSION DISBURSEMENTS FROM RESTRICTED ENDOWMENT	\$328		\$504
VALUE OF MISSION ENDOWMENT	\$3,493		\$3,227

TREASURER'S COMMENTS

Total income was better than plan through the fiscal year. This was from regular giving, i.e. pledge donations, Sunday collections as well as other income such as per capita collected and building use (which is primarily from WNSK). There was a bequest of approximately \$185,000 received by Central in September which contributed to the larger than plan income.

Expenses continued to be managed well and were also below budget in total. Expenses have increased over the prior year. This was due to a return to normal church programs and activities as well as persistent B&G needs. Costs have also increased in general over the same period as last year.

Central continued to require additional funds from the unrestricted endowment above the budgeted draw of 4% to fund regular operations during the year.

The Mission Endowment continued to exceed \$3 million with strong investment gains in the last quarter.

For more detailed information, please see the published Annual Report for 2023.



70 Maple Street
Summit, NJ 07901

Return Service Requested



THE KEY

Spring 2024

The publication of
CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
centralpres.org
Editor: Jeanne Thiemann

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

8:30 & 10:00 a.m.

*Central is worshipping in the Sanctuary on Sundays.
The 10:00 a.m. services are broadcast on HTTV and will
be live streamed to our YouTube channel.*